

On John Coltrane's "My Favorite Things"

NATHANIEL LEE HANSEN

With steady three-beat brushes and cymbal
of Elvin Jones, stand-up pulse of Steve Davis,
McCoy Tyner's chords thick as woolen mittens,
Trane bends Rodgers and Hammerstein
into shapes they'd surely never imagined,
his soprano hopping along melody's wire
before embarking on flights both articulated
and unsettling, while below minor triple groove:
canine teeth, apian pricks, melancholy.

Abrupt turn to sunshine of major,
saxophone a wild goose elated,
crying every note it can, high to low.
Its declaration celebrates possibility,
testing limits of pitch and tonality, at last
landing on the stilled lake of melody.